

# Utah WIC Policy and Procedures Manual

## Section C: Certification

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### C. CERTIFICATION

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### C.1. Certification Requirements

#### Policy: Conflict of Interest

There may be no conflict of interest between WIC clinic staff and the applicants or participants of the program. In addition, a single staff member may not determine eligibility for all certification criteria and issue food instruments or cash value checks to the same participant. Refer to section E.5 of the Policy and Procedures Manual for details on the Conflict of Interest policy.

#### Policy: Certification Requirements

Required items must be completed at each certification.

#### Procedure

The following must be completed and documented for each applicant at certification:

- a. **Participant Data** must be recorded in the computer system.
  - i. Demographic
  - ii. Health
  - iii. Nutrition Risk
  - iv. Food Package
  - v. Scheduling
- b. **Proof of residency, identity and income** (see sections C.4, C.5).
- c. **Prenatal Weight Gain Grid** must be plotted for all pregnant women at each clinic visit. Each clinic visit would include visits scheduled for the pregnant women and all visits for other family members.
- d. **CDC Growth Chart** must be plotted for all infants and children (age and gender appropriate). Documentation of **nutrition assessment**, as outlined in VENA guidelines (section I), must be provided in the computer system.
- e. **Rights and Responsibilities** form must be read and signed by the applicant/endorser, the proxy (if applicable) and the staff member verifying income, residency and identity. If the applicant is unable to read this form it must be read to them. This form must be completed at every certification visit, and does not need to be completed at follow-up or mid-certification health visits. A copy of the Rights and Responsibilities must be given to the endorser.
- f. **Core contact and referrals** must be documented in the computer system.

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- i. WIC Program Explanation to participants will be provided according to the VENA approach (see Section I VENA and Nutrition Education, I.5. Core Contact.)
- II. The following items **may** be required for certification:
  - a. Verification of Certification (VOC)
    - i. Accepted from transfers who are currently certified by another WIC agency to prove income and nutrition risk factor eligibility (see section C.10)
  - b. Complete prescription signed by a prescriptive authority, this is done using the Formula and Food Authorization form.
    - i. Required for participants receiving non-contract formula, exempt formula, or any other medical product ordered through the State office.
  - c. Health Data Referral form
    - i. Required for medical data obtained by the applicant's medical provider if used for certification.
  - d. High risk care plan for high risk participants
    - i. Assessment and Plan portion of SOAP note must be documented in progress notes, high risk tracking form, or in the computer at the time of certification.
  - e. Immunizations Release
    - i. Required for all clients agreeing to share their child's immunizations records (see section C.12).
  - f. Proof of guardianship/caretaker
    - i. Required for all non-parent applicants applying for benefits for an infant or child (see section C.4).

### **Policy: Presence at certification**

Applicants need to be present at the certification visit even if the certification is based on referral information (Federal Register §246.7). This includes women, infants and children to be certified along with the child's parent, legal guardian or caretaker.

### **Procedure**

- I. This requirement may be waived for those applicants whose medical condition is so severe that coming to WIC could jeopardize their health.

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- a. Examples may include:
  - i. A medical condition that necessitates the use of medical equipment that is not easily transportable.
  - ii. A medical condition that requires confinement to bed rest.
  - iii. A serious illness that may be exacerbated by coming in to the WIC clinic.
- II. This requirement may also be waived for the following situations:
  - a. A child who was present at his/her initial certification **and** is receiving ongoing healthcare.
    - i. Ongoing healthcare for children may be established using referral data, which includes the health visit data documentation from a physician, or someone working under a physician's orders.
  - b. An infant < 8 weeks of age who is medically high risk, as self reported by applicant/participant/caretaker; or as reported or documented by a physician, or someone working under a physician's orders.
    - i. Examples of criteria for the medically high risk infant include hospitalization, physician's orders for the infant to have no public contact, or serious illness.
- III. In addition, the clinic may waive the requirement for the following:
  - a. If being physically present would pose an unreasonable barrier, **and** infant was present at his/her initial certification **and** has documented ongoing health care from a health care provider other than the WIC local agency; or
  - b. An infant or child who was present at his/her initial certification **and** was present at a certification within the past 1 year **and** is under the care of one or more working parents or one or more primary working caretakers whose working status presents a barrier to bringing the infant or child in to the WIC clinic.
  - c. The clinic must assess each situation using detailed questions to ensure the need for applying these waivers.
- IV. If the applicant is not physically present at the certification visit, document this and the reason why in the participant's chart or in the computer.

### C.2. Application, Clinic Hours and Processing Standards

#### Policy: Applicants

Applicants are persons applying to receive WIC benefits or may be persons applying on behalf of a child or an infant (endorsers). Endorsers applying on behalf of a child or an infant may be a parent (mother or father), foster parent, legal guardian, or caretaker (see section C.4 for policy information on guardians & caretakers).

The person bringing the child to the certification appointment is the endorser for that certification period and may or may not be the same person from previous certification periods. The endorser may choose to designate a proxy if desired (see section C.9 for policy information on proxies).

#### Policy: Appointment Times

All WIC clinics must provide appointment times outside normal business hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.), for applicants who need extended hours. If the clinic's regular schedule does not include extended hours, the opportunity for appointments outside of the regular schedule must be visibly posted in the clinic.

#### Policy: Processing Standard Time Frames

Applicants will be notified of their eligibility or ineligibility within 10 or 20 days of contacting the local agency depending on applicant category.

#### Procedure

- I. The following applicants must be offered a certification appointment and must be notified of their eligibility or ineligibility within **10 calendar days** of contacting the clinic to request WIC benefits:
  - a. Pregnant women
  - b. Infants under six months of age
  - c. Homeless individuals
  - d. Members of migrant farm worker households who soon plan to leave the clinic service area
- II. The following applicants must be offered a certification appointment and must be notified of their eligibility or ineligibility within **20 calendar days** of contacting the clinic to request WIC benefits:
  - a. Breastfeeding women

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- b. Postpartum women
  - c. Infants 6 months of age or older
  - d. Children
- III. Time frames for certifying applicants begin when the applicant contacts the local agency to request program benefits and apply to all applicants regardless of whether they have been certified in the past or not.
- a. Document if the applicant chooses to wait longer than the standard 10 or 20 days.
- IV. For clinics operating on a walk-in basis,
- a. A daily list of applicants turned away due to inability to serve the client on that day must be maintained. The daily lists must include the applicant's name, address, phone number and date. Lists must be retained on file and will be reviewed at management evaluations to verify that processing standards were met. **OR,**
  - b. Required demographic information must be entered into the computer system documenting the contact.
- V. When funds are not available to serve clients, follow the procedures in section L.5, Caseload Management.

### **Policy: Extensions**

Extensions to the 20 day time frame will not be granted. Local agencies may submit a written request to the State WIC Director to extend the 10 day time frame to 15 calendar days.

### **Procedure**

- I. Extensions will only be granted in the following circumstances:
  - a. Clinics operating two or fewer days per month; or
  - b. In emergency or other unusual situations. Examples include:
    - i. Clinic moving to a new facility
    - ii. Heavy snow requiring clinic closure
    - iii. Other natural disaster

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- iv. Unexpected increase in unemployment in a clinic area, resulting in increased applications.

### **Policy: Documenting applications**

Participant demographics must be completed for all applicants on the day the applicant first contacts the clinic and an appointment is scheduled.

### **Procedure**

- I. Clinic must document the following information in the computer or on a manual log for each participant requesting benefits:
  - a. Today's date,
  - b. Applicant's name, address, and telephone number,
  - c. Category, and
  - d. Date of appointment.

### C.3. Certification Periods

#### Policy

All participants will be certified according to their category.

#### Procedure

- I. **Pregnant** women are certified for the duration of the pregnancy and to the end of the calendar month in which they reach six weeks after the end of the pregnancy.
- II. **Postpartum** women are women who are not breastfeeding and are certified to the end of the calendar month in which they reach six months after the end of the pregnancy or after termination of a pregnancy (including miscarriages and abortions).
- III. **Breastfeeding** women are certified until the end of the calendar month in which they reach one year postpartum, or until the woman stops breastfeeding, whichever occurs first.
- IV. **Infants** less than 6 months of age are certified for the duration of their first year up to the end of the calendar month in which they reach their first birthday. Infants over 6 months of age will be certified at six month intervals.
- V. **Children** are certified at entry into WIC and at six month intervals. The child's eligibility expires at the end of the calendar month in which he reaches his fifth birthday.

#### Policy: Shortening or extending certifications

The certification period may be shortened or extended by local clinics for no more than a period of up to 30 days. This may be done anytime during the certification period.

#### Procedure

- I. The following situations are appropriate for shortening or extending a certification period:
  - a. Difficulty with scheduling appointment,
  - b. Aligning certification schedules of family members,
  - c. Inclement weather,



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- d. Illness of participant, or
  - e. Transportation problems.
- II. The certification may not be extended for a participant who is categorically ineligible.
- III. Participants can be certified early without affecting the new certification and termination dates.
- IV. If the participant is found ineligible and the certification period must be shortened, the following procedures apply:
- a. If the participant is found to have no nutrition risk, then the participant receives benefits until the end of the current certification period.
  - b. If the participant is over income limits, then the participant is given 15 days notification with benefits and then is terminated. (See sections C.8 and G.1)
  - c. If the participant is no longer a resident, then the clinics should issue a VOC.
- V. Whenever a clinic changes the certification interval (shortens or extends), the reason must be documented.
- VI. If the certification period needs to be adjusted and problems occur with base dates, please contact the State Help Desk for assistance.

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### C.4. Residency, Identity and Guardianship

#### In this sub-section

The following topics are included in this sub-section.

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Proof of identity	12
No proof of identity and/or residency/provisional certification	15
Proof of guardianship/caretaker	17

#### Policy: Determining eligibility based on residency

All applicants must live within the district served by the local agency and within the jurisdiction of the state. Length of residency is not a prerequisite to receiving WIC benefits. Applicants do not have to be a US citizen in order to qualify for WIC.

#### Procedure

- I. Proof of residency is required at each certification visit prior to receiving WIC benefits. Applicants should be informed what proofs of residency are acceptable when certification appointments are scheduled.
  - a. Applicants should be asked to provide documentation of where they routinely live or spend the night.
  - b. Documentation provided as proof of residency must contain a street address.
    - i. A post office box cannot be used as documentation.
  - c. Self-declaration of residency is not sufficient.
- II. Type of proof provided must be documented in the computer system.
  - a. Documentation need not be copied but should be returned to the applicant.
- III. Participants are allowed to attend the clinic most convenient to them (nearest their home or workplace) if it is in their county/district of residence.
  - a. The following special population groups may be served by designated clinics regardless of residency status, and must still provide proof of residency:
    - i. Homeless individuals, and
    - ii. Residents of border towns with interstate agreements.

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- b. The State agency must approve any other exceptions.
  - i. The clinic director of the clinic wishing to certify the non-resident must make requests in writing to the State WIC Director.
  - ii. The letter must include the participant's name, ID number and reason for the request.
  - iii. A copy of both the request and the approval letter must be kept in the participant's file.

### **Policy: Acceptable proof of residency**

All applicants and transfers must provide acceptable proof of residency as outlined below.

### **Procedure:**

- I. Proof of Residency must contain a street address, not a P.O. box; must be current, and not a photocopy.
  - a. Utility bill
  - b. Medicaid/PCN card
  - c. Mortgage or rental receipt, contract or bill
  - d. Letter or note from landlord
  - e. Pay check stub
  - f. Bank statement
  - g. Other type bill
  - h. Letter from Human Services on official letterhead
  - i. Foster Letter (for foster children)
  - j. Court documents
  - k. Property tax notice
  - l. Vehicle registration or title
  - m. "Forwarded" mail if envelope with current address and postmark provided.
- II. Applicants who are unable to provide an acceptable proof of residency from the list above may provide letter from a governmental or business entity (third party) verifying residency. Acceptance of this type of letter or any other alternate proof of residency requires State agency approval.

### **Policy: Special situations – Residency**

Use the following procedures for each special situation.

### **Procedure**

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- I. Bills are not in the endorser's name.
  - a. Accept as proof of residency as long as the individual who the bills are addressed to is part of the economic unit.
- II. Two or more families are living together.
  - a. **Establish if they are separate economic units.**
    - i. If yes and all bills go to the other family, have that person write a letter stating they live together and the amount of utilities they pay.
- III. Family has no street address – P.O. boxes only
  - a. Have the applicant write down specific directions to their home.
  - b. If they have P.O. boxes and street addresses, a utility bill with a street address is required.
- IV. Resident of an Institution
  - a. The Utah WIC Program does not serve applicants living in an institution where meal service is provided. This does not include private residences, homeless institutions, and domestic violence shelters. (See section C.6 Homeless)
- V. Transfers (in state or out of state)
  - a. Any acceptable proof of residency as in initial certification
    - i. A VOC does not prove residency
    - ii. WIC ID packet does not prove residency
- VI. No proof of residency (see policy for no proof of identity and/or residency-provisional certification below)

### **Policy: Proof of identity**

All applicants, transfers, endorsers and proxies must provide proof of identity.

### **Procedure**

- I. Proof of identity is required at each certification visit prior to receiving WIC benefits.
  - a. Applicants should be informed what proofs of identity are acceptable when certification appointments are scheduled.

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- b. All parents, legal guardians, foster parents, caretakers and proxies must show proof of identity at certification and before checks are issued.
  - c. The voucher packet/ID card may be used as proof of identity at subsequent certifications and issuance of WIC checks.
    - i. The ID packet must be shown at each clinic visit before checks may be issued.
- II. Type of proof provided must be documented in the computer system.
- a. Documentation need not be copied but returned to the applicant.
- III. Names should be input into the computer and on the ID packet as they are listed on the form of identification presented. This aids in preventing and detecting dual participation.
- a. Compound last names or paternal-maternal names should be input into the computer if they are listed on the form of ID. A space or hyphen between names should be included when such is found on the form of ID.
    - i. The WICNU system only allows the first 15 characters of the last name.
  - b. Names may be input differently from the proof of identification only when there is a valid reason to do so, such as a recent name change due to:
    - i. Marriage
    - ii. Divorce
    - iii. Adoption, etc.

Additional documentation should be requested when names do not match the proof of identity. Comments must be entered into the computer explaining the reason the name does not match the form of ID presented.

### **Policy: Acceptable proof of identity**

All applicants, transfers, endorsers and proxies must provide acceptable proof of identification as outlined below.

### **Procedure**

- I. Initial certification
  - a. Proof of identity must be current and not expired, and cannot be a photocopy unless the copy is certified or notarized. Acceptable forms are listed below:

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- i. Driver license - domestic or international (Excludes driving privilege card)
  - ii. Medicaid/PCN card
  - iii. Military ID
  - iv. Birth certificate - domestic or international
  - v. Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA)
  - vi. Passport - domestic or international
  - vii. Work or school ID
  - viii. Utah Identification Card
  - ix. Tribal identification card
  - x. U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security:
    - a. Permanent Resident Card (Green Card)
    - b. Employment Authorization Document/Card
    - c. Certificate of Naturalization
    - d. Certificate of Citizenship
    - e. USA B1/B2 VISA/BCC (Border Crossing Card)
  - xi. Mexican Matricula Consular
  - xii. Foreign government national identification card with photo
  - xiii. Other photo ID issued by a third party agency (must be approved by the State agency)
  - xiv. Voter registration card – United States or Mexico
  - xv. Department of Human Services – DCFS WIC Program Letter - Form TR09 or Form KBS15 (both for foster children)
  - xvi. Court Document (such as adoption papers, etc.)
  - xvii. Infants only: (ID must have at a minimum a last name and birth date) hospital card/crib card, hospital bracelet, official hospital document/discharge papers, letter from midwife (for home births), letter from health care provider, Utah WIC Program Newborn Identification Form, immunization card.
- b. Applicants who are unable to provide an acceptable proof of identity from the list above may provide letter from a governmental or business entity (third party) verifying identity. Acceptance of this type of letter or any other alternate form of ID requires State agency approval.
- c. Personal recognition by clinic staff is not sufficient.
- III. Subsequent Certifications
- a. Voucher packet/ID card accepted except as noted below:
    - i. Children certifying for the first time as a child must bring proof of identity. This cannot be the WIC ID packet or forms of ID accepted for infants only.

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- ii. If a birth certificate, or other form of identification (with the exception of infant only ID listed above) was provided and documented in the information system at the infant certification, the ID packet is acceptable as proof of identification at the child certification.
  - iii. for lost ID packet, see special situations
- IV. Check issuance
  - a. Voucher packet/ID card accepted
    - i. for lost ID packet, see special situations
- V. Transfer (in state or out of state)
  - a. Any acceptable proof of identification as in initial certification
    - i. VOC does not prove identity
    - ii. WIC ID packet does not prove identity for transfers

### **Policy: Special situations – Identity**

Use the following procedures for each special situation.

#### **Procedure**

- I. Lost or stolen ID packet
  - a. The endorser only must show acceptable proof of identity in order to receive a replacement packet, and clinic must follow the procedures in Section E.13 for replacement.
- II. ID packet not brought to WIC appointment (not lost or stolen)
  - a. Endorser must show proof of identity, checks may then be issued.
- III. “Unborn” on Medicaid card
  - a. Accept as proof of identity.

### **Policy: No proof of identity and/or residency**

Applicants are required to provide proof of identity and residency. Occasionally applicants may be unable to provide proof of identity and/or residency. In some instances a provisional certification may be completed. In rare circumstances the certification may be completed without these proofs.

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### Procedure: Forgotten proofs

- I. If the applicant has proof of identity and/or residency, but it is forgotten or otherwise not provided at the certification visit, the clinic may continue the certification appointment based upon the applicant's self-declaration of identity and/or residency; however, the certification is not complete and checks may not be issued until proof is provided.
  - a. In the WICNU system enter emergency-no documentation, then make a priority comment to block check issuance.
  - b. The applicant may then retrieve the required proof and present it at the clinic to complete the certification and receive food benefits.

### Procedure: Proof temporarily unavailable (provisional certification)

- I. If proof of identity and/or residency is temporarily unavailable to the applicant, a provisional certification is completed. Provisional certifications may only be completed when the required proof does not currently exist, is not currently available to the participant or when retrieving forgotten proofs would cause a significant hardship for the applicant.
- II. The applicant must sign a statement on the ***Proof Not Available*** form stating why they are unable to provide this proof.
  - a. Staff must document the applicant's responses to the following questions printed on the *Proof Not Available* form:
    - i. What are the difficulties you are having in obtaining proof of identity/residency?
    - ii. Do you feel you can provide proof at a different time? If so, when?
    - iii. Do you feel you can obtain any of the types of proof we talked about?
    - iv. Are you a temporary or seasonal worker?
- III. Staff must verify identity and/or residency within one month after a provisional certification is completed.
- IV. The participant may be issued **one** month of checks but must provide proof before additional checks are issued. One month issuance of checks is defined as the current month whether this is a full or partial month.

### Procedure: Unreasonable barrier

- I. Certifications may be completed for applicants that meet all of the following conditions:



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- a. The applicant is **unable** to provide proof of residency or identity and the requirement would present an **unreasonable barrier** to the participant.
  - b. The applicant is one of the following:
    - i. A victim of theft or disaster
    - ii. A homeless individual
    - iii. A migrant farmworker
  - c. The requirement is waived by the State WIC Program Manager.
    - i. The Clinic Director should contact the State WIC Program Manager by telephone or submit a request in writing.
    - ii. If approval is granted, the Clinic Director must sign the completed *Proof Not Available* form.
- II. The applicant must self declare residency and/or identity and complete the *Proof Not Available* form.
- III. In the VISION system the applicant must sign an affidavit.
- IV. **Three** months of checks may be issued.

### **Policy: Proof of Guardianship/Caretaker**

Non-parent applicants applying to become the endorser for a child need to provide proof of guardianship or provide proof that they are the caretaker authorized by the parent to certify the child.

### **Procedure**

- I. Acceptable proofs of guardianship/caretaker include:
- a. Legal custodial/guardianship agreement,
  - b. Documentation from another agency listing the applicant as receiving benefits on the child's behalf,
  - c. Letter from Human Services/DCFS for foster parents,
  - d. A signed letter from the parent assigning temporary custody of the child to the applicant,
  - e. A signed letter from the parent authorizing the caretaker to certify the child.

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- II. In the event these proofs are forgotten or are not readily available, the *Proof Not Available* form may be used. The certification may be completed and one month's checks may be issued. This proof will be required to obtain subsequent month's checks. One month issuance of checks is defined as the current month whether this is a full or partial month.
- III. In the event it is unreasonable for the caretaker to bring these proofs:
  - a. The applicant may sign a written statement in the WIC office on the *Proof Not Available* form declaring they are caring for the child and explaining the circumstances under which they became the caretaker and cannot provide these proofs. This should only be used in unusual circumstances such as: the parent has abandoned the child, is incarcerated, incapacitated etc.
  - b. The Clinic Director must approve the situation.
- IV. Proof of guardianship/caretaker is required at each certification. This proof may be the same document that was provided for a previous certification period so long as the document remains current and valid.
- V. The proof of guardianship/caretaker must be documented in the comments in the computer system or a copy kept on file. Such documents may be scanned into the computer to be used at subsequent certifications if still valid.
- VI. Parental proof is not required unless custodial rights between the parents are in question.

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### C.5. Income Eligibility

#### Policy: Income eligibility

At each certification visit, total household income for each applicant must be calculated and recorded in the computer by a WIC staff member. Income is based on gross household income during the past 30 days (see this sub-section for exceptions.) The clinic must determine that the applicant's income is at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines published annually in the Federal Register. Anyone whose income exceeds the limit for their household size is not eligible for WIC unless adjunctively (automatically) income eligible, as described in this sub-section

For applicants stating they have no household income, see Special Income Situations.

#### In this sub-section

The following topics are included in this sub-section.

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#### Policy: Definition of household

A household is a group of related or unrelated individuals who live together as one economic unit and share income and expenses. Also may be referred to as a **family**, or **economic unit**. Households/economic units have one or more wage

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earners or have other economic resources which are shared among the group. The household/economic unit's income is used to pay bills and purchase food and other items for the group.

Note: more than one economic unit may reside in the same house. Separate economic units in the same house are characterized by splitting expenses and maintaining economic independence from one another. This occurs when income is kept separate and paying bills is a shared responsibility. Rent and other bills are divided and each economic unit pays a portion. Food is usually also purchased and consumed separately.

In many cases, young mothers who are living with their parents are part of their parent's economic unit. If this is the situation, their parent's income and household size needs to be considered for WIC. Each situation needs to be carefully evaluated in order to determine eligibility properly. (See Independent economic units below).

### **Procedure: Household size**

- I. The household size equals the number of individuals supported by the qualifying income.
  - a. A **pregnant woman** is counted as one plus the number of fetuses she is carrying.
    - i. For example, a woman who is pregnant with twins is counted as three family members.
    - ii. If the woman has a religious or cultural objection that precludes including the fetus as part of the household size, the fetus does not need to be included.

### **Procedure: Independent economic units**

- I. In certain circumstances an applicant who is living within a household of other adults may be considered a separate household/economic unit. If the applicant meets any of the guidelines listed below, proof of income from the other adults may not be required for determining eligibility. Probing questions should be used to determine if the applicant is self-sufficient and may be considered a separate household (independent economic unit).
  - a. The applicant can provide current eligibility of SNAP (Food Stamps), Medicaid/PCN or the Family Employment Program (TANF).
  - b. The applicant can verify their status as an emancipated minor as determined by the Court.

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- c. The applicant is paying for the majority of their living expenses such as food, clothing, daycare, diapers, and transportation.

### Procedure: Non-traditional households

- I. A breastfed **infant who is being breastfed by a woman other than the birth mother** cannot be included in the household of both the birth and non-birth mother. The household size may be determined by either the birth mother or the non-birth mother.
- II. A **child residing in a school or an institution**, who is being supported by the parent or guardian, is counted in the household size of the parent or guardian, since the family continues to provide the economic support.
- III. A **foster child** who remains the legal responsibility of the state or other welfare agency is considered a family of one with no income, if so listed on the foster letter. Payments made by the welfare agency for the care of that foster child may be reported as the income of that child. Foster children should be input into the computer system as an independent economic unit.
- IV. An **adopted child** or a child for whom a family has accepted the **legal responsibility** is counted in the household size within whom he/she resides.
  - a. The size and total income of the family are used to determine the child's income eligibility for WIC.
  - b. Income received on behalf of that child would be considered family income.
- V. In cases where **joint custody** has been awarded, the child is part of the household where he/she resides most often, or that of the custodial parent.
  - a. Income should be based and benefits supplied to the household where the participant resides most frequently.
  - b. The parent who has the child the most should be the endorser.
  - c. The child is not counted in the family size of the other parent/guardian.
- VI. When there is **joint parental custody, and the child(ren) spend equal time in each home** and both parents are income eligible, the following options are suggested:

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- a. Ask the parents to come to an agreement between themselves, as to which will be the endorser. They would then be responsible to see that half of the food goes with the child(ren) to the other parent's home.
- b. If the parents have court papers with instructions relating to issues such as this, they should be requested to bring them to the WIC clinic.
- c. Whichever parent comes into the WIC clinic first would be the endorser. The first parent would be instructed to see that half of the food goes with the child(ren) to the other parent.
- d. Make 1 parent a proxy and share checks.

### **VII. Families during times of military deployment.**

- a. Military personnel serving overseas or assigned to a military base, even though they are not living with their families, should be considered members of the economic unit. The income received by the military individual(s) and all other income received by the members of the economic unit should be counted as income to the household.
- b. Local agencies may be confronted with dramatic household composition changes for military family members in which military service personnel are deployed overseas or assigned to a military base and their children are in the temporary care of friends or relatives. In this and similar cases, three options exist in determining family composition and income:
  - i. One option is to count the absent parents and their children as the economic unit as would have been the case prior to the parents' deployment.
  - ii. A second option, depending on the circumstances, is to count the children as a separate economic unit; the unit must have its own source of income, e.g., child allotment(s).
  - iii. A third option, when option one or two are not applicable, is to consider the children to be part of the economic unit of the person(s) they are residing with; therefore family composition and income would be determined on this basis.
  - iv. These same options would apply if the children and one parent temporarily moved in with friends or relatives. The local agency has discretion in electing which option to utilize depending on individual family circumstances.

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### Policy: WIC Income Guidelines

The following table defines the income limits for the Utah WIC Program, effective July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012. Total household income must be at or below the amounts listed in order to meet income eligibility requirements.

Household Size	Annual	Monthly	Twice Monthly	Bi-Weekly	Weekly
1	\$20,147	\$1,679	\$840	\$775	\$388
2	\$27,214	\$2,268	\$1,134	\$1047	\$524
3	\$34,281	\$2,857	\$1,429	\$1,319	\$660
4	\$41,348	\$3,446	\$1,723	\$1,591	\$796
5	\$48,415	\$4,035	\$2,018	\$1,863	\$932
6	\$55,482	\$4,624	\$2,312	\$2,134	\$1,067
7	\$62,549	\$5,213	\$2,607	\$2,406	\$1,203
8	\$69,616	\$5,802	\$2,901	\$2,678	\$1,339
Each Additional Family Member Add	\$7,067	\$589	\$295	\$272	\$136

### Policy: Definition of income

Income is the total gross income before deductions for income taxes, employees' social security taxes, insurance premiums, bonds, etc., received by any and all members of a household.

### Procedure

- I. The following income must be **included** when calculating income:
  - a. **Monetary compensation for services**, which includes wages, salary and bonuses (including income from child care/babysitting, Avon sales, etc.), seasonal work, part-time work, temporary work, (including census workers etc.), commissions, fees, consultant fees, tips, training stipends (except where elsewhere excluded) and GI Bill funds.
    - i. Applicants may show proof of income by providing one of the following: current pay stub(s) from all sources noting the pay time frame (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, etc), a signed statement from their employer indicating gross cash earnings for a specified period or if current pay stubs are not reasonably available, an income tax return filed for the most recently completed tax year may be used. If a tax form must be

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used, **total income** as shown on tax form must be counted. (Form 1040 line 22)

- b. **Military pay** includes basic pay, food (BAS) and clothing cash allowances, military bonuses and incentives, including non-combat overseas and hazardous duty pay, CONUS COLA. (see income exclusions below)
  - i. Applicants may show proof by providing a recent Leave and Earnings Statement.
  - ii. If bonus pay is intermittent, follow the Procedures for Special Income Situations - Calculating income of deployed military personnel, outlined in this section.
- c. **Public assistance or welfare payments** include Family Employment Program (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or General Assistance.
  - i. Applicants may show proof by providing check stub(s) or award letter stating current amount of earnings.
- d. **Alimony and child support** includes payments received.
  - i. Applicants may show proof by providing a divorce decree, an award letter, a copy of a check received or a letter from the source.
  - ii. Child support and alimony payments paid **by** an applicant **cannot** be excluded from their income.
- e. **Unemployment compensation** includes workers compensation, strike benefits from union funds or severance pay.
  - i. Applicants may show proof by providing an unemployment letter or notice.
- f. **Other cash income** includes, and is not limited to cash amount received or withdrawn from any source including savings, investments, trust accounts and other resources which are readily available to the family.
  - i. Applicants may show proof by providing bank or account statements indicating regular draws on the account(s).
- g. **Regular contributions** include contributions from persons not living in the household, allowances from other family members or regular financial contributions from religious or charitable organizations.
  - i. Applicants may show proof by providing a letter from the person or organization contributing resources to the household.
- h. **Rental income** net rental income as shown on Federal tax form. Net rental income is calculated on Schedule E of the Federal tax form and generally includes any payments received from rental properties minus expenses.



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- i. Applicants may show proof by providing an income tax return for the most recent calendar year.
- i. **Any assets drawn down** include withdrawals from a bank, investment or other account. Sale of a property, sale of a house or sale of a car which is not reinvested into the purchase of another property, house, or car etc. Does not include tax refunds.
- i. Applicants may show proof by providing bank or account statements indicating regular draws on the account(s) or a bill of sale.
- j. **Garnished wages and bankruptcy income** may show proof by providing current pay stub(s).
- k. **Worker's compensation** includes any insurance payments or compensation for an injury.
- l. **Pensions and annuities** include any pensions or retirement benefits paid to the retired or their survivors either directly or through an insurance agency.
- m. **Self employment (farm or non farm)** includes **net profit** as shown on Federal tax form. Net profit for non-farm self employment is calculated on Schedule C of the Federal tax form; net profit from farming is calculated on Schedule F. The resulting profit or loss figures are then entered on form 1040 line 12 (business income) or line 18 (farm income). Total income is recorded on line 22 of form 1040. This amount includes all sources of income and should be the amount used for WIC purposes.  
For newly self employed applicants who have not yet completed a Federal tax return and Schedule C or F, The definition of net profit is the same as that used for tax purposes and generally includes gross receipts minus expenses. Gross receipts are the value of all goods sold and services rendered. Expenses include costs of goods purchased, rent, heat, light, power, depreciation charges, wages and salaries paid, and business taxes. Not included as net profit: the value of sellable merchandise consumed by the proprietors of retail stores. For self employed farmers net profit is defined as gross receipts, minus operating expenses, from the operation of a farm. Gross receipts are the value of all products sold, government crop loans, money received from rental of farm equipment, receipts from the sale of wood, etc. Operating expenses include cost of feed, fertilizer, seed, various farmhands, depreciation charges, cash rent, interest on farm mortgages, farm building repairs, farm taxes, etc. Not included as profit: the value of fuel, food or other farm products used for family living.

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Net profit does not mean taxable income after deductions for personal exemptions and itemized or standard deductions.

- i. Applicants may show proof by providing an income tax return for the most recent calendar year or accounting records for the self-employed.
- n. **Dividends or interest** includes dividends or interest earned on savings or bonds, income from estates or income from trusts.
  - i. Applicants may show proof by providing an income tax return for the most recent calendar year or bank or account statements.
- o. **Social Security** includes any Social Security benefits (SS, SSI, Survivors, and Disability/SSDI) received.
  - i. Applicants may show proof by providing check stub(s) or an award letter from Social Security stating the current amount of earnings or bank statements.
- p. **Government Civilian Employee** includes military retirements, pensions, Veteran's payments, private pensions or annuities.
  - i. Applicants may show proof by providing an annual statement that shows the monthly amount of retirement income.
- q. **Net royalties** includes payments received as shown on Federal tax form.
  - i. Applicants may show proof by providing an income tax return for the most recent calendar year.

### Policy: Definition of exclusions

Income exclusions cannot be counted when calculating income.

### Procedure

- I. The following **cannot** be counted in income calculations:
  - a. **Assistance received from Federal programs:** Medicaid, Medicare prescription drug card subsidies and related transitional assistance, SNAP (Food Stamps), School Lunch, Family Day Care Food Program, Child Care and Developmental Block Grant payments, public housing, home energy assistance, youth employment programs, relocation assistance and National Flood Insurance Program Payments.
  - b. **Military Family Housing Allotment:** Off-base cash housing allowance, value of in-kind benefits for on-base housing (BAH), OCONUS COLA (cost-of-living given to military personnel stationed outside the continental United States)

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- c. **Military Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance (FSSA):** payments made by the Department of Defense to certain low income members of the Armed Forces.
- d. **Military Combat Pay:** Additional pay received by a household member who is deployed to a designated combat zone and is:
  - i. Received in addition to the service member's basic pay;
  - ii. Received as a result of the service member's deployment to an area designated as a combat zone; and
  - iii. Not received by the service member prior to his/her deployment to the designated combat zone.
  - iv. Includes Hostile Fire Pay/Imminent Danger Pay and may include other types of hazardous and hardship duty pays received while deployed to a combat zone.
- e. **Military Deployment Extension Incentive Pay (DEIP) and Deployment Extension Stabilization Program (DESP)**
  - i. These types of military pay should be excluded from income while the service member is deployed.
  - ii. This income must be included as income if received while serving at the home station.
- f. **Education:** Tuition loans, educational grants, and scholarships, funded through Title IV of the Education Act of 1965 (Pell grant, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, State Student Incentive Grants, College Work Study, etc.) Payments received under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act. Mandatory salary reduction amount for military service personnel which is used to fund the Veteran's Educational Assistance Act of 1984 (GI Bill).
- g. **Volunteers:** Those under Title I (vista, etc), Title II (Retired Senior Volunteer Program, foster grandparents, etc.), and the Small Business Act.
  - i. If payment becomes a regular weekly income, it is to be considered income.
- h. **Tax refunds and rebates:** Federal, State or local government refunds or rebates, Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).
- i. **Loans:** Loans which must be repaid cannot be counted in income calculations.
- j. **Child's income:** Occasional earnings, such as income from babysitting or mowing lawns.

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- k. **Lump sums:** Insurance payments for damage to a house or car if used for repair or replacement.
- l. **Non-cash benefits:** Employer-paid portion of health insurance and other employee fringe benefits, including employer contributions to flexible spending accounts; food and rent received in lieu of wages; food or other items received from religious or charitable organizations.
- m. **Employee reimbursements:** Reimbursements from an employer for expenses incurred by the employee.
- n. **Other sources:** Financial assistance from a religious or charitable organization (excluding regular contributions); gifts (excluding regular contributions); Agent Orange Compensation Exclusion Act; Wartime Relocation of Civilians under the Civil Liberties Act of 1988; Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation Fund payments; Relocation Assistance for members of Navajo and Hopi Tribes; Land held in trust for Indian tribes, including Ute, Goshute, Skull Valley Goshute, Southern Piute, Northwestern Band of Shoshone; Job Training Partnership Act; Old Age Assistance Claims Settlement Act, except for per capita shares in excess of \$2000; Judgment Award Authorization Act; payments under the Disaster Relief Act of 1974.
- o. **In-kind housing and other in-kind benefits:** The value of such benefits is not considered income.
- p. Child support and alimony payments paid **by** an applicant **cannot** be excluded from their income.

### **Policy: Adjunct (automatic) income eligibility definition**

The policy for adjunct (automatic) income eligibility is described below.

- I. Applicants are eligible for WIC, regardless of household gross income, if they provide current proof of one of the following:
  - a. Currently receive Food Stamps (SNAP), Family Employment Program (TANF) or Medicaid ([Title XIX] Traditional Medicaid, Non-Traditional Medicaid, Emergency Medicaid or Primary Care Network [PCN]).
  - b. Presumptively eligible for Medicaid or Family Employment Program.
  - c. If a pregnant woman or infant currently receives Medicaid, **all members of the family are income eligible for WIC.**

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- d. If any member of the family currently participates in the Family Employment Program, all family members are eligible for WIC.
- II. Medicaid received by a foster child cannot be used for adjunct (automatic) income eligibility for the family with which the foster child resides.
- III. If an applicant qualifies for WIC based on receiving Expedited Food Stamps, also known as emergency food stamps, only one month of WIC benefits should be issued. Income or continued proof of SNAP/Food Stamp eligibility must be verified before further issuance. One month issuance of checks is defined as the current month whether this is a full or partial month.
- IV. CHIP does not qualify applicants as being adjunctively (automatically) income eligible.

### Procedure

- I. When an applicant is adjunctively (automatically) income eligible, they must provide verification of current enrollment in one of the above programs. If proof of current enrollment is not available, they must provide proof of income.
  - a. Verification of program enrollment may include the current month's Medicaid/PCN card, or a letter from a Human Service agency verifying current eligibility. Local agencies may allow applicants to provide proof of participation in adjunct eligible programs via the internet through the Department of Workforce Service's "myCase" system.
    - i. If the applicant qualifies based on Medicaid/PCN enrollment, the Medicaid/PCN number must be entered into the computer.
    - ii. If the applicant qualifies because a family member receives Medicaid or Family Employment, document this in the computer.
  - b. Food Stamp Horizon cards and Baby your Baby cards **may not be used** as proof.
- II. Families who are adjunctively eligible must be asked to voluntarily self-declare household income.
  - a. Staff should explain to the applicant that the self declared income will not affect eligibility, and that this information is used for statistical purposes only.
  - b. Applicants may estimate their gross household income when exact amounts are unknown. Proof is not required.

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- c. If the applicant does not wish to self-declare income or cannot provide this information, the clinic should document this in the computer.
- d. In VISION, income is family based.
  - i. If an entire family is adjunctively eligible, complete the adjunct eligibility link and then enter a self declared income amount. The type of “proof” selected should be the documentation that was used to prove the adjunct eligibility.
  - ii. If not all family members are adjunctively eligible, complete the adjunct eligibility link for those who are. Additional family members applying for WIC must provide proof of income; this will be the income record which is entered for the family. No other “self declared” income record is required.

### **Policy: Verification of income**

All participants who are not adjunctively eligible must provide verification of income.

### **Procedure**

- I. When a certification appointment is scheduled, clinic staff must tell the applicant or participant that proof of income is required and what documentation is required as proof of income.
- II. Paycheck stubs representing the last 30 days of pay or proof of adjunct (automatic) income eligibility are the preferred forms of income verification.
  - a. For those applicants who get paid weekly, four pay stubs are sufficient, or two stubs for those who get paid every two weeks (proof of 28 days income).
  - b. The most recent pay stubs the applicant has received should be requested; however, the last full completed month’s stubs may be accepted. For example, on February 15th the applicant may bring in stubs representing pay from January 15th through February 15th, or they may bring all of the stubs from January.
  - c. In addition to verifying paycheck stubs, the clinic staff must ask applicants if there are any other sources of income in the family.
    - i. If the applicant reports receiving additional income from sources such as a relative helping with rent etc. this income should be included with total income, but proofs of these minor sources of income need not be required. Self declaration of additional income in this type of circumstance is sufficient.

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- d. If paycheck stubs are not reasonably available, other proofs of income are acceptable as listed above in the definition of income.
    - i. Acceptable proofs include income tax returns filed for the most recently completed tax year. These are most commonly used for the self-employed and persons with various sources of non-wage income.
    - ii. Clinic staff must determine what proofs of income most accurately reflect the applicant's current income.
  - e. Applicants are expected to provide documents to confirm income and/or participation in an assistance program. However, when the applicant has difficulty obtaining proof of income, a local clinic can confirm that the applicant receives such benefits and/or income by **telephone contact** to the appropriate source, with prior approval from the applicant.
- III. When income is verified, **document the type of proof provided** in the computer. Documentation need not be copied but should be returned to the applicant.
- IV. Upon verifying income, the staff member must sign the designated line on the applicant's Rights and Responsibilities form.

### **Policy: No Proof of Income**

Applicants are required to provide proof of income or adjunctive eligibility. Occasionally applicants may be unable to provide proof of income. In some instances a provisional certification may be completed. In rare circumstances the certification may be completed without these proofs.

### **Procedure: Forgotten proofs**

- I. If the applicant has proof of income, but it is forgotten or otherwise not provided at the certification visit, the clinic may continue the certification appointment based upon the applicant's self-declaration of income; however, the certification is not complete and checks may not be issued until proof is provided.
  - a. In the WICNU system enter emergency-no documentation, then make a priority comment to block check issuance.
  - b. The applicant may then retrieve the required proof and present it at the clinic to complete the certification and receive food benefits.

### **Procedure: Proof temporarily unavailable (provisional certification)**

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- I. If proof of income is temporarily unavailable to the applicant, a provisional certification is completed. Provisional certifications may only be completed when the required proof does not currently exist or is not currently available to the participant.
- II. The applicant must sign a statement on the ***Proof Not Available*** form stating why they are unable to provide this proof.
  - a. Staff must document the applicant's responses to the following questions printed on the *Proof Not Available* form:
    - i. What are the difficulties you are having in obtaining proof of income?
    - ii. Do you feel you can provide proof at a different time? If so, when?
    - iii. Do you feel you can obtain any of the types of proof we talked about?
    - v. Are you a temporary or seasonal worker?
- III. Staff must verify income or adjunctive eligibility within one month after a provisional certification is completed.
- IV. The participant may be issued **one** month of checks but must provide proof before additional checks are issued. One month issuance of checks is defined as the current month whether this is a full or partial month.

### Procedure: Unreasonable barrier

- I. Certifications may be completed for applicants that meet all of the following conditions:
  - a. The applicant is **unable** to provide proof of income and the requirement would present an **unreasonable barrier** to the participant.
  - b. The applicant is one of the following:
    - i. A victim of theft or disaster
    - ii. A person who works for cash such as
      1. a homeless individual,
      2. a migrant farmworker,
      3. or an illegal alien.
  - c. The requirement is waived by the Clinic Director.
    - i. The Clinic Director must sign the completed *Proof Not Available* form.
- II. The applicant must self declare income and complete the *Proof Not Available* form.
- III. In the VISION system the applicant must sign an affidavit.



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- IV. **Three** months of checks may be issued.

### **Policy: Zero Income**

In rare situations, an applicant may report **zero income** (not receiving income from any sources or programs that are included as income in this section); these applicants shall be allowed to use self-declaration and may receive a full issuance of **three** months of checks.

### **Procedure:**

- I. Staff must document the applicant's responses to the questions printed on the ***Zero Income Statement*** form. These questions should help the staff and the applicant to determine:
  - a. Whether the applicant meets the definition of a household/separate economic unit (see definition of household, independent economic units above).
  - b. Whether the applicant has no household income and qualifies as a zero income applicant.
  - c. Whether the applicant's income will need to be reassessed at the next food benefits issuance appointment (see income reassessment below).
- II. In addition to the questions printed on the *Zero Income Statement*, staff should ask other questions as necessary to assess the applicant's situation.

### **Policy: Income calculation**

Income must be calculated according to the applicant's pay frequency.

### **Procedure**

- I. Income should be entered into the computer based on the frequency of pay.
  - a. Calculate the average gross pay of the pay stubs provided and input it into the computer according to the pay frequency. For example; if an applicant who is paid semi-monthly brought in two pay stubs, showing amounts of \$500 and \$700 the amount entered would be \$600 (the average of the two checks). The pay period would be input as semi-monthly.
  - b. When necessary, income may be calculated based on hourly pay rate and number of hours worked per week. This method may only be used when

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the pay rate and the hours worked per week can be verified from the proof provided, such as a letter from the employer or paycheck stubs.

- II. The computer will determine income eligibility based on household size and income. If the income exceeds the Federal guidelines, the certification may not be completed.
- III. The following table describes how to manually calculate annual and monthly income from the previous month's checks.

If the pay frequency is	AND the amount is	Annual	Monthly
Monthly	Always the same	Multiply one check times 12	
Monthly	Different	Add 3 checks together and multiply by 4 or See <i>Special Income Situations</i> below.	Add 3 checks together and divide by 3
Every two weeks (26 times per year)	Always the same	Multiply check by 26	Calculate annual then divide by 12
Every two weeks (26 times per year)	Different	Add 2 checks together and multiply by 13	Calculate annual then divide by 12
Twice each month (24 times per year)	Always the same	Multiply check by 24	Multiply check by 2
Twice each month (24 times per year)	Different	Add 2 checks together and multiply by 12	Add 2 checks together
Weekly	Always the same	Multiply one check by 52	Calculate annual then divide by 12
Weekly	Different	Add 4 checks together and multiply by 13	Calculate annual then divide by 12
A combination of the above		Calculate separately as described above and add together	Calculate separately as described above and add together

### Policy: Special income situations

Apply the following procedures to special income situations. Probing questions and professional discretion are required to accurately assess income in these situations. Contact the State WIC Office, Operations Coordinator, when further guidance is needed.

### Procedure: Fluctuating or irregular income

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- I. A family's level of income varies due to the frequency or regularity of employment, including professions with busy and slow periods. This applies to families with individuals who are employed but not currently receiving income and to families who are currently earning a higher income but only on a temporary basis. This includes, but is not limited to construction workers, seasonal agricultural workers, self-employed persons, teachers, students, military personnel, summer/winter resort employees, temporary workers and persons on extended leave due to childbirth or illness. Income is determined using **annual**, rather than monthly income when it is determined by clinic staff that this best reflects the family's true gross income.
- II. If the applicant receives a one-time, annual or quarterly bonus, enter the amount as part of annual income. If the applicant frequently receives bonuses, such as monthly or every pay period, enter the amount with their current rate of income.
- III. A lump sum payment is a large sum of money received by the applicant at one time. Lump sum payments are counted as annual, not monthly income. Cash received through the sale of a property, house or car which is not reinvested into another purchase is also a lump sum payment and treated as annual income. The exception to lump sum payments is if the payment is an insurance payment. This type of payment is a "reimbursement," not income and should not be included. Income calculations for lump sum payments may be handled in either of the following methods:
  - a. Consider the household's income over the past 12 months including the lump sum.
    - i. Input this amount as annual income into the computer.
  - b. Consider the household's current monthly rate of income, plus take the lump sum payment amount divided by twelve (12) and add this sum to the monthly income for the twelve months following the receipt of the lump sum.
    - i. Input this amount as monthly income in the computer.
    - ii. Make a comment in the computer regarding the income computation method including the sum to be added to the monthly income and the month in which this sum no longer needs to be added.

### **Procedure: Unemployed**

- I. Use an applicant's current rate of income if the applicant is unemployed.
  - a. Hourly wages/salary received previously from the job which the applicant no longer has do not need to be included in the current total income.

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There is no “waiting period” from the time a person loses a job until they become income eligible for WIC when they are unemployed and not receiving or expecting any income. The income sources listed below must also be considered when determining the income eligibility of an unemployed person.

- b. If the applicant continues to receive regular income in the form of severance payments or unemployment benefits these are included as current income.
- c. Cash-out of a 401K account, cash-out of vacation pay or receipt of a one-time severance payment upon termination are treated as lump sum payments and included as annual income as explained above.
- d. When a person makes regular withdrawals from any type of savings account to cover living expenses, these withdrawals are considered income for WIC purposes. (See definition of income - Assets drawn down.)
- e. If the applicant is receiving financial assistance from family members or other sources this is included as income.
- f. The *Zero Income Statement form* should only be completed if there is no other source of income in the household.
- g. Applicants should be reminded to notify the clinic when they become employed so that income may be reassessed.

### **Procedure: Calculating income of deployed military personnel**

- I. In accordance with law and regulations, WIC income eligibility determinations must be based on gross income. Therefore, local agencies need to ensure that gross income is computed as best it can be determined, based on available data, for such military families. All gross income must be counted **except**: (1) the value of in-kind housing and other in-kind benefits, (2) combat pay, and (3) payments or benefits provided under certain federal programs or acts which are excluded from consideration as income by law (refer to income exclusions in this section).
- II. Military personnel have two options in terms of their paychecks if they are temporarily overseas or elsewhere in the United States. First, military personnel have the option to direct-deposit paychecks in a joint account, accessible to their families. The majority of the servicemen and servicewomen choose this option. In some cases, the pay stub is sent to

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the military personnel and another copy is made available to family members, if they have power of attorney. Second, military personnel have the option to designate a spouse allotment and/or a child allotment, whereby the government sends the family member(s) a check in an amount authorized. The allotment(s) designated for family members may reflect only a portion of the military person's total pay.

- III. Some military families, particularly those that include military service personnel serving overseas, may have difficulty producing a pay stub or other documentation of the gross military income. As permitted in WIC regulations and policies, if the State agency determines that requiring an applicant to provide income documentation would present an unreasonable barrier to participation, it may allow the applicant to self-declare income, accompanied by the applicant's signature on a statement specifying why he/she cannot provide documentation of income. Local agencies are to use reasonable discretion on this determination and when in question contact the State agency for guidance.
- IV. Some military families may begin reporting a higher gross income amount at the time of application or reapplication for WIC benefits than existed prior to a military deployment. This may occur as a result of military personnel receiving additional military compensation for hazardous or combat duty. This additional income, in most cases, may be excluded from income calculations for WIC if the military service member is deployed to a designated combat zone (see C.5 Definition of Exclusions).
- V. In addition, many local agencies may encounter applications from families in which one or more family members are military reservists who have been placed on active duty. If this situation is encountered local agencies should determine such family's income eligibility based on the family's "current" rate of income, while the reservists is on active duty, as opposed to annual income.

### **Policy: Income reassessment and income ineligibility during certification period**

Participants may be found ineligible, based on income, at any time during the certification period. Income reassessment is mandatory during a certification period if the local agency receives information from any source, including from the participant, that a participant's household income has increased or that the participant is no longer adjunctively (automatically) income eligible because they or a family member no longer participate in the program for which they became adjunctively (automatically) income eligible. Local agencies are **not** required to seek out or request this information. If there is not sufficient time remaining in the certification period to reassess income and

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effect the change (less than 90 days) than income reassessment is not required.

### Procedure

- I. If information is received by the local agency that a participant may no longer be eligible based on income, staff must:
  - a. Contact the participant to request that proof of household income be brought to the clinic .
  - b. Income must be calculated according to policy to determine eligibility. A new income record should be entered into the VISION system based on the proof of income provided.
  - c. If the participant voluntarily informs the clinic that household income has increased to the point that the current income is now above the income guidelines, the clinic may terminate the participant based on the self declaration.
    - i. If the participant does not wish to come to the clinic to provide proof of over-income, a new income record cannot be entered in VISION. The applicant can be terminated for the reason "Participant requests termination".
  - d. If a client is terminated for over-income during a certification period, checks must be returned and voided. 15 days notice with benefits must be issued. (See section C.8, 15 day notification.)
  - e. If the participant has already received the final check issuance for the certification period, (and less than 90 days remain in the certification period) no income reassessment or termination is required.
  - f. Clinics may not find participants ineligible based solely on the fact that they are no longer adjunctively (automatically) income eligible because they or a family member no longer participate in the program for which they became adjunctively/automatically income eligible; in this situation income must be assessed to make the determination of eligibility.

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### C.6. Homeless

#### Policy: Definition of homeless

- I. An applicant is considered homeless if the applicant lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence; or if their primary nighttime residence is:
  - a. A supervised public or private shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations. This includes group shelters, rescue missions, shelters for victims of domestic violence, motels, etc.
  - b. A public or private place not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings. Examples include tents, cars, parks, hallways, sidewalks, abandoned buildings, doorsteps, etc.
  - c. A temporary residence for persons intended to be institutionalized.
  - d. A temporary accommodation in the residence of another individual. A person may no longer be considered homeless while living in a temporary accommodation of another individual if it has been more than 365 days.

#### Procedure: Determining eligibility of homeless applicants

- I. All of the usual documentation required to certify an individual must be obtained for homeless individuals.
  - a. An applicant who is determined homeless must:
    - i. Meet the WIC income requirements.
      1. If they have no source of income or support, this must be documented on the *Zero Income Statement* form.
      2. Self declaration of income may be accepted from homeless individuals, use the *Proof Not Available* Form when necessary.
    - ii. Reside in the State of Utah.
      1. Homeless individuals may be served by designated clinics, regardless of where they reside.
      2. They are not required to have a permanent address.
      3. A mailing address of a friend, relative, shelter or the WIC clinic may be used.
- II. A VOC card should be issued at the certification visit to ensure continuation of benefits.

#### Procedure: Processing standard time frames

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- I. All homeless individuals must be certified within 10 days of their first contact with the local clinic.
  - a. If the applicant chooses to wait longer than 10 days, document this information in the computer.

### **Procedure: Food packages**

- I. Special food packages have been designed for homeless individuals.
  - a. They include
    - i. Peanut butter or beans instead of eggs;
    - ii. 6 ounce ready to use juices;
    - iii. UHT or powdered milk; and
    - iv. Canned beans.
  - b. See section H (supplementary foods) for specific information.

### **Procedure: Homeless facilities**

- I. Supplemental foods may be provided to homeless individuals who reside in temporary shelters as long as the participant is eligible and the following conditions are met:
  - a. Participant has free access to their food.
  - b. The temporary shelter cannot receive financial or in kind benefits from a person's participation in WIC.
    - i. For example, the homeless facility does not transfer WIC food to their general inventories or reduce the amounts of food given to the WIC participant.
  - c. WIC foods must not be used in communal feedings.
  - d. Proxies from the temporary shelter may not routinely pick up WIC checks for all program participants in bulk.
  - e. Both the participant and the temporary shelter should be made aware of these conditions.

### **Procedure: Monitoring compliance of homeless shelters**



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- I. Local agencies will monitor compliance in their area's homeless and domestic violence shelters which house active WIC participants to ensure that the above criteria are followed.
  - a. A representative of the local agency must visit each shelter serving WIC participants at least once every three years. Agency staff must speak with a representative of the facility and complete the Utah WIC Homeless Shelter Monitoring Form, documenting compliance.
  - b. Shelters which house WIC participants that have not been previously approved by the local agency must be visited within 30 days of the participant's certification date and the monitoring form must be completed.
  - c. This visit is also a good opportunity for outreach (See Section L.4).
  - d. A copy of the Utah WIC Homeless Shelter Monitoring Form must be kept on file at the clinic, and a second copy should be sent to the shelter after the on-site visit.
  - e. The clinic's file for homeless shelters will be checked by the State agency during monitoring visits to the local agency.
- II. Local agencies will ask the approved shelters to contact the local agency if conditions change and they no longer qualify as an approved shelter.
- III. If a shelter no longer meets conditions to be approved by WIC, or if after the initial review by the local agency, the shelter is not approved, the local agency must contact the State agency for instructions regarding certified participants who reside in the shelter.
- IV. The Utah WIC Program does not serve applicants living in an institution where meal service is provided. This does not include homeless and domestic violence institutions. (See section C.4 Special situations -residency)

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### C.7. Migrants

#### Policy

The majority of migrants served in Utah are Hispanic. Clinics should make every effort to ensure bilingual staff is available to serve participants in their native language. Appropriate education should be tailored to their specific culture and lifestyle. Evening hours must be available to serve this working population. Every effort should be made to certify these applicants immediately.

#### Policy: Definition of migrants

- I. An individual who:
  - a. Has principal employment in agriculture on a seasonal basis;
  - b. Has been so employed within the last 24 months; and
  - c. Establishes a temporary residence for the purpose for such employment.

#### Procedure: Time frames

- I. Every effort should be made to certify these applicants immediately.
- II. All members of migrant farm worker households must be certified within 10 days of their first contact with the local clinic.
  - a. If the applicant chooses to wait longer than 10 days, this information must be documented in the comment section of the computer.

#### Procedure: Special certification procedures

- I. Income should be checked for the migrant population at each certification visit.
  - a. Use annual income due to a fluctuation in salary.
  - b. Income for migrants must be checked at least every 12 months.
  - c. Migrants and their family members may use expired VOCs as proof of income if their income was determined within the past 12 months.
  - d. If the applicant works for cash, use the *Proof Not Available* Form if necessary.
- II. Issue a VOC card at the certification visit to ensure continuation of benefits.

### C.8. Check Issuance

#### Policy: Food package assignment

A CPA must assign all food packages and document in the computer system. A CPA must also assign food packages that are changed in the middle of a certification.

#### Policy: Prorating food packages

Food packages can be “prorated” or reduced when less than a full package is needed.

#### Procedure

- I. The computer, according to the date range between the issuance and base dates, makes prorations automatically. This adjustment is based on 3 ten day periods for the month. The number of days remaining before the base date will determine if the food package will be a 10 day, 20 day or a full package (no proration).
- II. The following are valid reasons to issue a prorated food package:
  - a. When a participant picks up checks late.
  - b. When a participant’s next base date is changed.

#### Policy: Proration overrides

A CPA must authorize proration overrides; justification **must** be documented in the comment section.

#### Procedure

- I. Below is a list of valid reasons to override a proration:
  - a. Participant has special nutritional needs. Proration overrides for nutritional reasons require State nutrition staff approval.
  - b. A clinic error occurred with the printed checks and the checks need to be reprinted.
  - c. Participant is late to pick up checks due to clinic schedule, illness or extreme weather conditions. The participant must have contacted the

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clinic prior to the date that the proration would have occurred. The clinic must reschedule the client within 1-2 working days.

- II. When using the proration override, the amount of food issued to the participant **must** be nutritionally appropriate for the remaining length of time in the current issuance period, before the next issuance.

### **Policy: 15 day notification**

Active participants to be terminated during a certification period are entitled to a minimum of 15 days written notification with benefits prior to termination. This includes women who stop breastfeeding their child who is older than 6 months. This does not include participants to be terminated for dual participation or those to be terminated for not picking up checks for two or more months in a row. (See Section G.1 for more information regarding ineligibility and termination.)

### **Procedure**

- I. Participant must be active in the computer system.
- II. Terminate the participant using the appropriate term code. This is completed automatically in the computer if the category is changed from 'B' to 'N' or if income is changed to an amount over the income guidelines.
- III. The termination date in the computer will be changed to either the 10<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> or last day of the month, whichever date is at least 15 days in the future.
- IV. Any previously issued checks must be returned to the clinic.
- V. Void and reissue checks through the new termination date if the term date extends into the next month. Proration override is not permitted. Any prorated checks issued are valid until the end of the month.
- VI. Issue a Letter of Ineligibility (see section G.1).

### **Policy: Issuing checks prior to recertification**

All remaining checks must be printed for infants, children, and breastfeeding women prior to their recertifying.

### **Procedure**

If the base date is before the termination date, and the infant or child is due to be recertified, print all remaining checks before starting the certification process.

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Checks will not need to be preprinted if the base date is the same as or after the termination date.

### **Policy: Instructions to participants**

Endorsers and proxies must receive instructions on the proper use of food instruments and cash value vouchers.

### **Procedure**

- I. At a minimum, verbal instructions must be given to all endorsers and proxies at each certification appointment on the following topics:
  - a. First and Last days to use
  - b. Authorized WIC Foods List (food card)
  - c. ID packet and signature requirements
  - d. Right to complain about WIC vendors
- II. First time applicants must receive thorough instructions regarding these topics. At subsequent certifications these must be quickly reviewed to ensure understanding.
- III. These verbal instructions are in addition to any instructions or education given via orientation video, computer based training, or printed instructions. (Refer to section E.5 for further details on instructions required.)
- IV. Significant changes to the Authorized WIC Foods booklet must be explained when distributing newly revised booklets to participants.

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### C.9. Proxies

#### Policy

A proxy is a person chosen by the participant or endorser to pick up and redeem checks in place of the participant/endorser. Participants should be encouraged to use a proxy in lieu of mailing checks. Only two proxies are allowed for a single endorser.

#### Procedure

- I. The proxy signature must be updated on the Rights and Responsibilities at each certification period. The endorser must also sign the Statement of Proxy Designation at each certification period when a proxy is listed. Clinic staff must emphasize that the proxy and endorser signatures must be on the WIC ID packet which is taken to the store. Proxy status is not valid beyond the expiration date of the certification period.
- II. The proxy must show proof of identity at each clinic visit prior to checks being issued. See Section C.4 for approved forms of identity.
- III. The endorser is responsible for ensuring the proxy follows the responsibilities as listed:
  - a. The proxy must read, sign and date the Rights and Responsibilities form; sign the voucher packet/ID card; sign the checks at the store, and attend nutrition education classes and individual counseling sessions.
  - b. The proxy must deliver any written or verbal notifications received at the clinic to the endorser.
- IV. If the proxy does not follow all WIC responsibilities, the clinic staff should educate the proxy and/or the participant must select a new proxy.
- V. Proxies are not allowed to certify infants or children in place of the parent, legal guardian or caretaker.

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### C.10. Transfers

#### Policy

A Verification of Certification (VOC) is a document that is issued to WIC participants as proof of income and nutrition risk factor eligibility for the program. A VOC must be issued to participants transferring out of state. A VOC may be issued to participants transferring within the state. In state transfers are normally handled within the computer system and do not require a VOC.

#### Procedure

##### I. Issuing VOCs

- a. A hard copy VOC must be issued to any participant who notifies the clinic they are moving out of state. All participants affiliated with the military who are transferred overseas must also receive a VOC.
- b. A hard copy VOC can be issued from the computer system. The document contains the participant's name, ID number, date of birth, category, due date (if applicable), height, weight, hematocrit/hemoglobin, priority, certification and termination dates, income determination date, nutrition risk factors and base date. There is also space for the clinic to sign the form and stamp the form using the local agency stamp.
- c. At the certification visit, issue a VOC to participants who are members of farm worker families, homeless families, or families who will be leaving the clinic area. If possible, the participant should be provided with the new clinic address and phone number.
- d. Military participant transferring overseas should be instructed that there is no guarantee the WIC Overseas Program will be in operation at the site where they will be transferred, by law only certain individuals are eligible for the WIC Overseas Program, and issuance of a WIC VOC does not guarantee continued eligibility and participation in the WIC Overseas Program.
- e. A copy of the High Risk Care Plan must be attached to all VOCs for participants designated as "high risk" who are transferring from the clinic.
- f. A copy of the prescription and documentation of the number of months non-contract or special formula is approved must be attached to all VOCs for participants who are transferring from the clinic.
- g. Document all VOC issuance.

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### II. Transfers into clinics

- a. All VOC documents must be accepted as proof of income and nutrition risk factor eligibility, even if they are incomplete. VOC documents must be accepted from all state and territorial WIC programs as well as the WIC Overseas Program that serves military personnel stationed in another country.
- b. A VOC must be a physical document received either in person, through the mail, by FAX or by email. A verbal verification over the phone is not acceptable. If an out of state transfer does not provide an acceptable VOC, a full certification appointment is required.
- c. Out of State VOCs:
  - i. Must contain the participant's name;
  - ii. Must contain a certification date;
  - i. Cannot be expired (note: some states have 1 year cert periods for infants); see C.7 for exceptions for migrants
  - ii. May have different nutrition risk factors or eligibility standards; and
  - iii. Must be filed in the participant's chart.
- d. For out of state transfers, enter certification and termination dates into the computer as printed on the VOC. Termination dates may be extended to the end of the month to convert to static month eligibility.
- e. Transfers (in state or out of state) must provide proof of residency and identity (refer to section C.4). Neither a VOC nor a WIC ID Packet can be used to prove identity or residency.
- f. All participants transferring into the clinic must be issued a Utah WIC ID Packet and must read and sign the Rights and Responsibilities Form.
- g. If the client has checks from the previous state these should be taken from the client. If the client does not have checks to turn in, the client must be asked if benefits for the current month have already been redeemed in the previous state. If so, benefits cannot be issued for the current month. Clinics are not required to contact other states to determine if benefits for the current month have been redeemed. WIC participants who fraudulently redeem full benefits in two states during the same month are guilty of dual participation.
- h. If the participant is high risk, issue one month's checks and schedule for follow-up with a RD for the next month.



### **C.11. Documentation**

#### **Policy**

All participant information must be documented in a consistent area decided upon by the clinic.

#### **Procedure**

- I. This may be in the participant's chart or in the computer.

#### **Policy**

Any changes made by the computer help desk to a participant's information must be documented in the computer system.

#### **Procedure**

- I. This includes base date roll-backs, voids that are removed from checks, changes in status and category, etc.
- II. Documentation must include the reason the data was changed.

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### C.12. Immunization Screening and Referral

#### Policy

The purpose of the minimum screening and referral protocol is to identify children under age two who may be at risk for under-immunization. It is not meant to fully assess a child's immunization status, but allows WIC to effectively fulfill its role as an adjunct to health care by ensuring that children who are at risk for under-immunization are referred for appropriate care.

#### Procedure

- I. When scheduling participants for a certification appointment, remind the parent/guardian to bring in their immunization card as part of health screening process.
  - a. Explain to the parent that WIC is making sure children are up to date on immunizations, but that immunization records are not required to obtain WIC benefits.
- II. At each certification visit for children under age 2, screen the infant/child's immunization status using the Utah yellow Immunization Record or other written immunization history.
  - a. Screen the infant/child's immunization status by counting the number of doses of DTaP they have received. Documentation as to the number of DTaP doses will be made in the computer system.
  - b. Use the following table for screening:

Age of participant	Minimum # of DTaP
3 months	1 dose of DTaP
5 months	2 doses of DTaP
7 months	3 doses of DTaP
19 months	4 doses of DTaP
  - c. If the infant/child is under-immunized:
    - i. Provide information on the recommended immunization schedule, and
    - ii. Refer the participant to their primary medical provider.
- III. The Immunizations (USIIS) Release of Information Form must be completed by the endorser at every certification visit when immunization records are shared with or input into USIIS.

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- a. It states that the Utah Surveillance Immunization Information System has been explained and the endorser agrees to have their child's immunization information entered into the statewide immunization registry and shared with other primary health care providers, as well as public health officials.
  - b. If the Release of Information Form was signed by the endorser, all immunization cards or other immunization records from a physician's office can be copied and given to either nursing staff or other appropriate personnel at the Local Health Department for entry into USIIS or another local immunization tracking system.
  - c. If the endorser refuses to sign the Release Form, then document this and continue with the certification process.
  - d. **Refusal to sign the Release Form cannot be a barrier to certification.**
- IV. If an immunization record is not provided to the WIC clinic:
- a. Provide a reminder list of what to bring at the next visit to the participant. Include a reminder to bring in a written immunization history.

### C.13. Smoking Cessation Referral

#### Policy

Nutrition education will include information on drug abuse and other harmful substances (Federal Regulation 246.4 (ii)). And, local agencies must provide drug and other harmful substance abuse information to all pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women and to parents or caretakers of infants and children participating in the WIC program (Federal Regulation 246.11 (a)(3)). At least during the initial certification, each participant ...shall be advised of the types of health services available, where they are located, how they may be obtained and why they may be useful (Federal Regulation 246.7 (4)).

The purpose of this policy is to identify women who are currently smoking as well as others that smoke in the home who express interest in receiving information and assistance to quit.

#### Procedure

- I. Any participant who identifies themselves or anyone in the household as currently smoking during a certification appointment will be asked if they are interested in receiving help in quitting or helping the person in their household quit.
  - a. If the answer is "No" ...
    - i. Document this response in the participant's comment screen of the computer system.
    - ii. Provide general education and distribute materials on the Utah Tobacco Quit Line (1.888.567.TRUTH).
    - iii. Repeat the same question again during each subsequent recertification appointment thereafter and at any other time the behavior is being discussed.
  - b. If the answer is "Yes" ...
    - i. The system will automatically print out the Tobacco Quit Line referral form to the laser printer.
    - ii. The form needs to be faxed to the Utah Quit Line within the same business day.
- II. For any participant that is referred for smoking cessation services document this like all other referrals. Provide applicable education based on the assignment of risk factor 371 which refers to maternal smoking (Nutrition Risk Manual, pg 188 – 189) or risk factor 904 which refers to environmental tobacco smoke exposure (Nutrition Risk Manual, pg 287 – 289).

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- III. On an annual basis, information must be provided to all levels of WIC staff about the harms of smoking and second hand smoke, as well as cessation services and any new research findings in these areas.